

great value of the work as a whole. It is a monument of patience, diligence and skill; it is eminently practical, and its perusal cannot fail to profit every worker in the field of nervous and mental diseases, who will turn to it of course not to obtain information in anatomy and physiology, but in the diagnosis and treatment of the most mysterious affections of the nervous system.

In how high esteem our author holds the accessory sciences, and how thoroughly he is imbued with the idea that insanity is but a branch of general neuro-pathology, let the concluding lines of his second introductory chapter attest:

"From all these facts follows the practically important dictum, that all the methods of observation and treatment of the so-called diseases of the mind must be the same as those applied to other cerebral diseases, and that only he can intelligently recognize and treat them who has the various diagnostic aids at his disposal, and possesses special knowledge of the physiology and pathology of the entire nervous system."

E. C. SPITZKA.

II.—DOWSE: NEURALGIA: ITS NATURE AND CURATIVE TREATMENT.

NEURALGIA: ITS NATURE AND CURATIVE TREATMENT. (The Brain and Diseases of the Nervous System, vol. II.) By Thomas Stretch Dowse, M. D. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 182 Fifth Avenue. New York, 1880. Pages, 198.

In his preface the author says: "If the reader expects to find in the following pages any vague or speculative theories relative to the pathology of neuralgia, he will be greatly mistaken."

This statement will be found true, for the book does not contain a theory of neuralgia of any kind worthy of the name. If the author regards theories or rational explanations of important groups of morbid phenomena, such as are observed in neuralgias, as impossible or useless, or necessarily "vague or speculative," he is sadly in error. If, however, he means to be understood as simply declining for the present to offer a theory or explanation of the phenomena of neuralgia, then he should be permitted quietly to have his own way. But, in any case, it seems strange a writer should either lay so little stress upon having and giving a sensible theory, or should allow himself so little time and space as to render such a course impracticable when he sets himself down deliberately to write a book on such a subject. For our own part we do not hesitate to condemn, whether in medical practice or medical writings, the irrational haste to get at "practical" results which so often involves the neglect of thoughtful rational theory. If we may be permitted to judge from what

duced very favorable results in the hands of Dr. Dowse "in facial, lumbar and abdominal neuralgias, especially when of catarrhal, rheumatic or gouty origin." Iodide of potassium is highly spoken of, more especially when there is a "clear history of gout or syphilis."

The author gives a very short and inadequate account of extract of Indian hemp. There is no more valuable remedy in those forms of neuralgia of the head which pass under the name of hemicrania or migraine. Of its persistent use in large doses for the relief of such neuralgias we cannot speak too highly after a rather large experience. But, as Dr. Dowse says, great care must be taken in selecting the drug. The majority of its preparations found in the market are either of uncertain strength or worthless. To this fact more than anything else must be ascribed the ill success with it which is so often reported.

Very much depends, in the successful treatment of neuralgias, not alone on a just notion of their nature, but on a judicious and tactful use of remedies. Dr. Dowse's practical observations are valuable though not novel.

The remainder of the work is occupied in giving an account of various forms of neuralgia, which are generally brief, and present nothing worthy of special mention after what has been said of the author's therapeutics. Upon the whole we fail to see any place this work is to fill, which had not been already better done by works already in existence, and quite as accessible to English readers as is this little hastily written memoir.

III.—HERMANN: PHYSIOLOGY.

HANDBUCH DER PHYSIOLOGIE. Herausgegeben von Dr. L. Hermann.

Since our notice of the first two volumes of this work, (January, 1880,) several new parts have appeared. The third volume comprising the organs of the special senses is now complete. The dioptrics of the eye and the perception of light and colors are presented by Prof. A. Fick, while Hering has taken up the sense of space and the movements of the eyeball. Both parts are well written and quite exhaustive, but they do not at all please when compared with Aubert's physiological optics written some four years ago as a part of Graefe and Saemisch's (German) handbook of ophthalmology. The comparison is just since both works have the same scope. Aubert's compilation though smaller in bulk, is fully as exhaustive and contains its information in an easily digestible form. The present work, however, suffers from too technical a style, which without increasing its value as a book of reference, is apt to deter even the more advanced student from reading it as a book of information. The